



## LOUISIANA SENATE

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### **STATE SEN. ALLAIN MOVES TO SET HIGHER STANDARD FOR VOTER APPROVAL OF TAXES**

#### **PROPOSES CHANGE IN STATE CONSTITUTION TO REQUIRE A MINIMUM VOTER TURNOUT IN TAX ELECTIONS**

District 21 State Senator Bret Allain (R-Franklin) believes that if Louisiana citizens are asked to put up their hard-earned money to pay taxes, more than just a handful of voters should be deciding on those taxes in local tax elections. To that end, he is proposing a change in the state constitution in Senate Bill 200 that would require a minimum turnout of 20% of the impacted registered voters in a tax election before the tax proposal, bond issue or debt proposal can be approved.

“What we are talking about here is setting a higher standard for political subdivisions and special taxing districts to increase taxes on citizens,” Sen. Allain said. “All too often we see elections called at a time when minimal voter turnout can be expected. We ought not to have a situation where 2% of the electorate is deciding on tax proposals that impact the other 98%.”

Sen. Allain also notes that higher taxes, especially higher property taxes, are a deterrent to economic development. “Property taxes are fixed costs of doing business. The burden of higher property taxes makes it particularly difficult for start-up companies or existing businesses looking at expansion.”

The Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) supports Sen. Allain’s proposals. Chambers of Commerce across the state and other business and community groups have endorsed Senate Bill 200.

As LABI Taxation and Finance Council Director Jim Patterson said, “Our members believe it is only right that a reasonable percentage of registered voters participate in any decision to impose or increase local taxes on the people and businesses in our state. We support Sen. Allain’s bill because the measure seeks to bring this about.”

The proposed change in the state constitution detailed in Senate Bill 200 is scheduled to be considered by the Senate Committee on Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Monday, April 14<sup>th</sup>. The meeting begins at 1:30 p.m. in the Hainkel Briefing Room at the State Capitol. Citizens can watch the debate on the Internet at [www.legis.la.gov](http://www.legis.la.gov).

If finally approved by two-thirds of the State Legislature, voters would consider the proposed change in the state constitution at the Nov. 4, 2014 statewide election.

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